



**GUIDE
TO WRITING
LOCAL HISTORY
OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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GUIDE TO WRITING LOCAL HISTORY IN SASKATCHEWAN

by

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PREFACE

This guide was prepared as a project of the Saskatchewan Archives Board and is being published under the auspices of the Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee Committee. Dr. Lewis H. Thomas, Provincial Archivist, John H. Archer, Legislative Librarian, J. D. Herbert, Director of Historic Sites, and Gilbert Johnson, Marchwell, kindly read the original draft and offered suggestions. The following printed guides were consulted: D. D. Parker, *Local History, How to Gather It, Write It, and Publish It* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1944); S. B. McCready, *The Modern Scrapbook and Suggestions for Recording Local History* (Toronto: Hess Printing Company); *What You can Write about the History of your Home Town* (Oregon State Archives, Bulletin I 1948); Marion W. Hagerman, *History All About Us* (distributed by Department of Women's Work, University of Saskatchewan); *Pioneer Days and Ways in Manitoba and Questionnaires 1-5*, (The Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, 1953). Unpublished papers by Bruce Peel, Edmonton, and Mrs. Dorothy Kamen-Kaye, Regina, were also consulted. Over forty local histories were examined, and Miss Barbara Hobbs of the Shortt Library of Canadiana at the University of Saskatchewan assisted in locating these.

The purpose of this survey has been to arouse interest in the writing of local history in Saskatchewan, with stress placed upon its value and the need for action soon. The suggestions regarding content, format, publication, and source material have been intended to assist those who may become interested but who are unsure of the procedure to be followed. While they are designed to assist in the preparation of a more or less formal history, it must not be assumed that this is the only worthwhile type of local history publication. For example, some very attractive and valuable publications have consisted simply of a collection of well-written reminiscences, accompanied by a description of the locale and an outline of the main events.

Whatever form the publication may take, it is hoped that many citizens and groups will be encouraged to write local history, for only through the efforts of many sincere workers will there be an adequate documentation of the growth of our communities and a recognition befitting the accomplishments of the courageous men and women who were their founders.

A. B. T.

Guide To Writing Local History In Saskatchewan

THE NEED FOR LOCAL HISTORIES

The value of preserving the history of our Saskatchewan communities should be apparent to all, but perhaps it cannot be stressed too highly when one considers that many centres in the province are in danger of losing touch with their past. In relatively few has there been any effort to record the growth of the area. Occasionally individuals have made this type of historical research their leisure-time activity, finding it a fascinating hobby, and a field for worthwhile achievement. Such efforts are gratefully acknowledged by other citizens who wish to know the background of their families and communities. For some of them, this interest has a very practical aspect. Leaders in various fields of endeavour realize that an examination of the achievements and failures of the past will serve as a guide to action in the future. The carefully compiled local history will serve also to place the community in its setting in relation to trends and developments of provincial, national, and world-wide significance. Many people regard history as a study of remote times and other places. They connect it neither with themselves nor with their neighbours, failing to realize that history is inclusive of all events everywhere, and that the history of a nation is incomplete so long as the story of its component parts remains untold. Thus local history becomes a basis for writing social, economic, political, and cultural history of the wider area. Aside from these values, the publication of a local history is a fitting memorial to the pioneers, outstanding citizens, and various organizations and institutions which have flourished in a community.

The writing of local history in Saskatchewan dates back to the Territorial period. In the 1890's pamphlets appeared describing the Battle River Valley and the Regina and Prince Albert districts. These were followed in 1897 by what might be termed the first local history, J. W. Powers' *The History of Regina*, the story of the first five years of that city. Almost a generation later, in the years prior to the first World War, a number of Boards of Trade published historical sketches of their communities, combined with descriptions of their agricultural and commercial possibilities. These productions are, of course, long out-of-date. More recently, Homemakers' Clubs entered the Lady Tweedsmuir Village Histories competition, and several fine group efforts resulted. Now that Saskatchewan centres are growing up, jubilees of fifty years and longer are common, and already several anniversary histories have appeared.

The anniversary-inspired history has definite advantages both for compilation and publication. With the enthusiasm evoked by the occasion, it is easy to get co-operation from many people in collecting material, and the financial backing for publication may be more readily forthcoming. It should be remembered, however, that a perfect anniversary is not necessary. Thirty-five years in retrospect may be as effective a period as fifty. Publication might also be in conjunction with the fiftieth anniversary of the province (1935), taking as the approach the growth and contribution of the individual community during the period.

Whether or not the history is associated with an anniversary, compilation should not be postponed so long that many of the old-timers who should be contacted have disappeared from the scene. In addition

to the transience of human life, the inevitable destruction of letters, papers, and records of all kinds which continually takes place is an urgent reason for a start being made. Every community has a history that should be recorded, but the longer the start is delayed the less complete the record will be.

WHO MAY WRITE LOCAL HISTORY

Possibly one reason for comparatively few local histories is not so much a lack of interest as a reluctance on the part of anyone to make the attempt. If this reluctance reflects a feeling of inadequacy, it is well to point out that a professional historian is not needed. What is required is a person with genuine interest in the field, someone who will be prepared to sacrifice considerable time and to face a good deal of hard work, with little or no monetary reward. The amount of work involved may prove to be too much for one person, and he may require one or more assistants to help him. Indeed it may be desirable to combine the talents of a thorough research worker with someone who has a flair for writing. The production may be extended to include a group, a service club, an historical society, or perhaps the community as a whole working through a committee. A class or school may decide to undertake the project, and this would assure wide support through the parents. How much time a class might be able to devote to a thorough history must of course be considered, and it is possible that they might undertake a less ambitious program in view of their capabilities and to avoid sacrificing time from essential class work. However, local histories compiled by schools have been published, and a fine group of unpublished ones are on display at the Fort Battleford National Historic Park.

SOME BASIC CONSIDERATIONS

Once the decision is made to produce a local history, the problem of what shall be included in it immediately arises. There will be general agreement that the history should go back to the beginning of the community, but beyond that there may be discussion about whether a chronological or a topical outline should be followed. The "year by year" type of outline is not recommended. On the other hand, in most communities there have been distinct periods of development, and the outline can be based on them, with topical (subject) arrangement within each. If this type is favored, considerable thought must be given to defining the periods, and many interesting historical questions will arise concerning events and influences which were predominant in each period. A second type of outline is topical, and this presents fewer difficulties. One of these is given below, but it must be adapted to the particular community in question. Indeed it is hardly desirable that a whole set of stereotyped local histories should be produced by slavish adherence to such an outline.

Whatever type of history is decided upon, another basic problem is the recognition to be given to individuals. To whom should credit be given for various developments? Even if individual names are mentioned freely, persons may be overlooked, with the result that someone may be offended and perhaps an incomplete or unbalanced picture given. It is relatively simple to decide in the case of persons who have held important offices, but what old-timers should be mentioned? Space itself will be a factor in deciding. Probably it will be safer to settle upon the very earliest residents, or, if the numbers are few, those who came

the first year. In rural areas, a township map with the original homestead entries is a convenient and interesting device for noting early settlers. Mention may not be enough, and biographical material will add color to the narrative. In this connection, the importance of securing full names and correct spelling of names should be kept in mind. Recognition of those citizens who have been most influential in various phases of community development may be a touchy problem. In effect, the local historian is faced with a problem which has long been of interest to historians in wider fields. What is the role of the individual in history? Have broad movements, economics, religion, geography, been the motivating forces, or has the individual been the important factor? In any event, these forces, however significant, have been operative through individuals, and the local historian may find himself indulging in some stimulating speculation as to which is basic and to whom specifically credit is due.

While the local historian must consider the role of the individual in the community, he must also consider the community in relation to the rest of the world. While his primary interest will be the local scene, he must not think that local events took place in a vacuum. He should attempt to relate them to similar experiences elsewhere on the plains and to external influences from beyond the region. Only by so doing will he be able to achieve the perspective necessary to portray the growth of the community in its true setting.

A SUGGESTED OUTLINE

Having considered these basic problems, the compilers of the history will need to prepare an outline. The skeleton outline below will serve as a guide, with some suggestions following in respect to what might be included under the various topics.

1. Geography of the Community.
2. The Earliest Inhabitants.
3. Pioneer Settlement.
4. Economic and Social Development.
5. Political Development.
6. The History of Education.
7. The History of Local Churches.
8. The History of Social, Economic, and Cultural Organizations.
9. The History of Sports and Recreation in the Community.
10. The Community in Two World Wars.
11. Conclusion.

In connection with the geography of the community, it is essential at the outset to define the unit of study. What is the area under study and what is its location in the province? The topography of the district, its natural beauty, landmarks, the nature of the soil, the presence of mineral deposits, annual precipitation, are aspects which might be discussed and their influence on subsequent developments considered.

It is likely that the earliest inhabitants of any Saskatchewan community were Indians. If no longer present in the area, they may have been there within living memory, or, on the other hand, their presence may now be determined only by archaeological findings. Whatever information may be acquired regarding these original inhabitants will serve as a valuable introduction to the story of life in the community. It might be added, of course, that there may be districts in which there are no traces of Indian culture, and consequently there would seem no necessity for intruding a discussion of Indian life unless it can be specifically related to the area. A similar consideration applies to the presence of fur traders. Where information from written material or the existence of remains affords evidence of a fur trading post in the district, this phase of development will make an interesting addition to the work. The narratives of early travellers can be checked for references to the particular district, although it is likely that only the earliest settlements were visited. Some of the early surveyors' reports can be found in the publications of the Department of the Interior.

In describing pioneer settlement, it will be necessary to determine when and whence the first settlers came, who they were and why they came. The origin of the name of the community should be explained. A general description of pioneer life will be expected. What were the homes like? What were the activities in which they engaged, both in terms of earning a living and for pastime? What kinds of tools, machinery, and conveyances were used? Other aspects of pioneer life will suggest themselves as the historian reads the accounts of the early days and talks to old-timers.

The topic "Economic and Social Development" is intended to include the growth of the community following the initial stages of settlement. Developments in transportation and communication, farming techniques and machinery will be noted. The growth of business establishments and industry, as well as the provision of utilities such as water, lights, streets and roads, will be traced. Fluctuations in growth and the effects of depression are other aspects. The story can be carried through to the present day, but may require more than one chapter, depending upon how ambitious a history is undertaken.

The political development of the community may be more readily determined. This phase will involve a study of the growth of local government. When was a need first felt for some form of local authority and how was it met? When was the district first incorporated as a rural municipality, village, or town? Who were the first councillors? What problems did they have to meet? What subsequent developments took place? It will be interesting to note when representation in provincial and federal governments was first accorded and what citizens served as representatives.

The history of education and of churches will be obvious topics in any local history. In both cases, it will be a story of initial need, organization, construction, trials and triumphs. The problem of individual recognition will again occur, but undoubtedly the contribution of founders, early teachers, and clergymen will be mentioned. Church groups, school boards, and home and school associations will be included. Many interesting details might be included about such things as changes in teaching methods, provision for boarding the teacher, methods of transportation used by the clergyman in making his rounds, and how salaries were met.

The histories of various cultural, social, and economic organizations can be conveniently grouped together. Suggestive of the various types of organizations are farmers' organizations, co-operative societies, labor organizations, Boards of Trade, service clubs, and women's organizations. There will be other groups concerned with such activities as drama, art, and music. Whether or not particular groups existed to promote these activities, space should be devoted to general developments in these fields.

The division between this latter topic and those activities which might be termed "recreational" may be somewhat arbitrary. However, sports will conveniently form a separate topic. The variety of sports will be apparent without elaboration. It will be of interest to discover the origins of teams and clubs, to describe outstanding athletes, and to trace the rise and fall of certain sports. In the latter connection, some, like soccer, appear to have had a vogue with certain groups of settlers, while others, like softball and baseball, have alternated in the public interest. The establishment of a civic centre, recreational park, hockey stadium, curling rink, or swimming pool will provide interesting material for this section.

The story of the community in two world wars will deserve special treatment. Indeed, the older communities may have sent young men to the South African War as well. The uprising of 1885 may have affected certain districts but this phase in western development might more suitably be dealt with under "Pioneer Settlement". An interesting account of the community in the world wars might be built around the types of activity, regulations and their observance, effects of the wars, and armistice celebrations. Honour rolls and citations to distinguished service personnel might be included.

The topics here suggested will afford a thorough coverage of the history of the community. The conclusion may be apparent from the story. Frequently it will include some reference to prospects for the future, based on the achievements of the past and the circumstances of the present. An effective conclusion might be woven about the "spirit" of the community. This is an intangible element, but frequently a community does seem to have a quality that sets it apart from its neighbours. It may be a reflection of co-operative effort sustained throughout the years. It may be a spirit of friendliness or helpfulness, a definite religious emphasis, or a record of cultural achievement. It may be associated with the continuing stream of distinguished sons and daughters who have gone forth to serve in various fields or with a product or craft where skill and workmanship over the years have established an enviable reputation. If there has been no predominating characteristic, there may have been a combination of several.

MAPS, CHARTS, and ILLUSTRATIONS

Maps, charts, and illustrations will provide a graphic and attractive supplement to the written material of the history. A map showing the location of the area in relation to nearby centres and the province as a whole will be helpful to outside readers. Another showing old trails, historic sites, and possibly early ranches and homesteads, will be most interesting and represents a type of record which should be available in respect to any community. Some communities may wish to add a modern map or street guide. Charts or graphs can be employed to show population growth and other statistical information. Some early photographs of the community and others at subsequent intervals might be

contrasted with a modern photo, possibly taken from the air. Numerous pictures of landmarks, buildings, farming operations, machinery, relics, pioneers, prominent citizens, and gatherings will add to the attractiveness of the publication. Thumbnail sketches might be used to illustrate certain phases.

TECHNICAL FORMAT

A number of features which might be referred to under the heading of technical format merit consideration. While the cover of the book will depend largely on the type of work done by the printers, it should be attractively designed, and there is an opportunity here to draft the services of a local artist. A title will be needed and, if a descriptive phrase is selected, it is suggested that a sub-title giving the name of the community and the inclusive dates of the history be added. This will prove useful for reference in later years.

Many local histories have included dedicatory messages. The theme most frequently encountered is an appropriate reference to the accomplishments of the pioneers.

One of the essentials of a local history should be a table of contents. Surprisingly enough, it is a feature often omitted. The table of contents should follow naturally from the outline used in writing the narrative. Descriptive chapter headings suggestive of the content might be substituted for the topics in the outline.

Foot-notes may be used, but they will not likely be extensive in a booklet designed for popular circulation. Often it will be possible to indicate within the context the authority for a statement. However, a list of the sources used should certainly be appended. Acknowledgement of assistance from various individuals and groups might be combined with this or given in a preface.

While an index is not essential, it would be a desirable feature of the history. Preparation of an index will entail a considerable amount of work, and it may be possible to "farm out" the job to some person interested in the production.

PUBLICATION

Various methods of publication suggest themselves, such as mimeographing, multilithing, and printing. In the mimeographing process a stencil is cut on a typewriter and as many as 3,000 copies of it can be run off on a duplicating machine. While this method is the least expensive, no pictures can be reproduced. Only simple line drawings can be made on a stencil by use of a stylus. In multilithing, the script and illustrative material are photographed, and an unlimited number of copies can be made from the plates so developed. Only a few commercial firms are equipped to do this type of work. A combination of two methods, where the written material is mimeographed and the pictures are multilithed, is sometimes used. Printing will undoubtedly present the most "finished" appearance, and the local press should be consulted for estimates and advice. It is possible that the local paper will wish to use some of the material in its columns. If the type is set up for this purpose, it could be used again in printing the booklet, with a saving in cost. If photographs are used as illustrations care should be taken to select those which are in sharpest focus. Old and yellowed photos can often be used if carefully rephotographed and a glossy print prepared.

Once the cost of publishing the desired number of copies is estimated the method of financing can be determined. It is possible that the prospective sale of copies will be enough to finance the operation. However, a subsidy may be necessary in order that the history can be sold at a nominal price or a most generous hat-planting rate will be met. An advance sale of copies, a public subscription, or a grant from the local community are possibilities here. Occasionally a local photographer may be found who will have the project free-of-charge. Hundreds of communities and at least one road now have their their support in getting recently published. Perhaps the most frequent mistake, however, is in advertising. Where space is used for advertising, there is a problem of financing the finance and appearance of the book. Usually very satisfactory advertisements are submitted, but a more appropriate type is the historical advertisement in which the growth of the firm is outlined, or some description of the original products, goods and services is provided. While advertising is often scattered throughout a book, it would seem preferable to confine it to the final pages. Depending on the nature of the campaign, donors or advertisers might be listed on a single page.

A final stage in publication will be proof reading. The manuscript should be carefully checked before it is submitted to the printer. Then the galley and page proofs or the sheets used for monographing, must also be checked for variations from the original text and misprints and errors. This work must not be left to the printer. The author will most readily recognize errors that have occurred at this stage.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

While problems of organization, technical format, and publication must all be faced, the writer of local history will find his big job to be one of research. Where to he to begin? There is probably no hard and fast rule to be followed, especially as he may be someone who has already been in the streets and got his feet wet. However, it would seem wise for him to do some general reading on the history of the West in order to gain perspective. He should read anything that has already been written about the particular locale. He might also think through some recent local history in order to see how others have tackled the problem. Having gained some general background, the local historian must then proceed to the major material available. There are a number of techniques which may be helpful to him. He will find it necessary to take notes on what he reads, using index cards or some sort of page. The latter, if a monograph is to be written, will be convenient and inexpensive. He will learn to use headings for easy reference as he sorts and classifies his material, and he will learn to note carefully the source of material in order that he may refer back again. Inaccuracy and lack of knowledge of the use of it in his narrative. In addition, making notes on written material, he will want to interview many people. At least some of the questions he asked should be prepared in advance. This preparation, along with a courteous attitude and unobtrusive guidance of the conversation will usually ensure a successful interview. Note taking during the interview may break up the flow of words and he will have to adapt his method to the individual, perhaps waiting until after the interview before making notes. A questionaire may be useful for gathering information, especially from witnesses, where one would expect the same questions to be repeated. In gaining access to material, whether public or private, a straight forward, mannerly approach, explaining the purpose of the research, should be enough to gain interest and support.

What source material is available to the local historian? For convenience, those suggested here are divided into local sources which one might expect to find in an average Saskatchewan community and outside sources which would have to be consulted elsewhere. The use of outside sources will depend on the time and effort to be expended on the project. A wide reference to sources will provide a more complete story and make possible thorough checking of details for accuracy.

LOCAL SOURCES

A. WRITTEN OR PRINTED MATERIAL:

1 **Municipal Records.** In every municipal office there will be records dating back to the original charter, providing that fire or lack of space has not caused their destruction. It may be necessary to dig them out from layers of dust in a musty vault but the effort should pay off in useful information. Minutes of council meetings will reveal the names of officials, the provision of services, and discussion of various problems. Statistics of births and deaths will be found. Correspondence may deal with vital problems in the growth of the community. Files of the 1930's should provide an insight into relief problems. Registration of land titles for taxation purposes may give clues as to when people arrived or moved away. Changes in appraisal values will be an index to boom and depression.

2 **Records of Public Utilities and Services.** Closely allied with council records are the records of public utilities and services which operate as branches of the civic government. Here details lacking in council minutes and correspondence may be available about water, lights, transportation, public health, and sanitation.

3 **School Records.** Through the co-operation of the secretary of the local school board it will be possible to consult old registers for names of teachers, trustees, and enrolment figures. Minutes and correspondence should be available to document the story of early construction and later improvements. School papers, yearbooks, and minutes of class societies should not be overlooked for activities and biographical material.

4 **Hospital Records.** These will reveal names of doctors and nurses, as well as details of construction and extension of services. It may be possible to trace the occurrence and extent of epidemics such as the influenza outbreak after the first World War.

5 **Church Records.** It may be found that there already exist histories of churches in the community. Minutes of church organizations should prove invaluable in tracing their growth. Baptismal and marriage records may provide the earliest available vital statistics.

6 **Business Records and Account Books.** These will give information about prices, fashions, and kinds of commodities, as well as documenting the growth of individual firms. Incidental information may be gained about economic conditions and the movement of settlers, as accounts are opened and closed. The records of the local Wheat Pool committee, credit union, co-operative store, creamery, or oil business are suggestive of those which might be examined to trace the growth of co-operatives in the community.

7 **Military Records.** Records of a local reserve unit may be available. The Canadian Legion (S.E.S.L.) will have records of service personnel, and churches usually have honour rolls of those who served in the two world wars.

8 **Newspapers.** Where newspaper files have been preserved, the historian will find a source of information about almost every phase of the life of the community. News items, social columns, births, marriages, and deaths should all be watched. Editorials will reflect community problems and local interest in provincial and national politics. Advertisements will reveal much about entertainment, businesses, products and prices. The information found in newspapers will prove a useful check against other material dependent on fading memories. Even single copies of newspapers which have been preserved should not be overlooked since such copies were probably saved because of items which may prove as significant to the local historian as they did to the persons who preserved them. Anniversary issues or special editions may yield a good deal of historical information.

The publisher of the local newspaper may have done a considerable amount of commercial printing, and samples of this work may still be preserved. For example, the display book of the *Smithsborough Herald*, published at Hattered, includes samples of printing done over many years. Among numerous items which would be of interest to the historian are programmes, 1/2 page 1/2 days and concert, auction sale bills, notices for the local hotels, calling cards, wedding invitations, and the prospectus of a local business college.

9 **Minutes of Clubs and Societies.** Minutes and correspondence preserved by club secretaries will provide the story of various economic, political, and cultural organizations which existed in the community.

10 **Memoirs.** The personal reminiscences of citizens who happily took time to record their impressions may exist either in published or unpublished form. It must be remembered in using this type of material that time may have lessened the accuracy of details, that the writer may unconsciously have magnified his own role in events, or that he may have left out events in which his participation or conduct may have been subject to question.

11 **Private Letters and Papers.** Letters may be quite rewarding to the extent that they apply to the local community. Family records may exist in the family Bible or elsewhere which will at least give dates and perhaps biographical sketches. Private accounts may include such items as threshing bills, sales of livestock and purchase of household goods. More careful accounts will likely be found since the imposition of the income tax (the farmer kept for many years a record of every animal in a sizeable herd of cattle. The date of arrival, description, pet name, vaccinations and sickness, offspring, date of sale and price received were noted. Such a record reveals not only prices, but fluctuations in the price of the herd in view of low prices or poor crops, epidemics, and loss due to natural hazards.

12 **Diaries.** Among the more interesting personal records are diaries. They may easily be the most reliable of all personal material since they were written at the time and not being intended for publication or perhaps even to be read by anyone else, they are entirely frank. Here may be learned the day-to-day story of life as it was lived, the work undertaken, the meals, the weather, trips to town, visitors, illness, the story of household pets and farm livestock, and, depending on the cul-

ing and interests of the author, comments on various aspects of local and national affairs.

13. **Local Histories.** There may already exist earlier histories of the community. These should be carefully read for information which may no longer be available, for checking facts, and for contrasting the opinions which the perspective of passing years may have altered.

14. **Anniversary Addresses and Sermons.** Churches and other organizations which have celebrated anniversaries at various intervals in their history will be a source of addresses which may trace their growth and that of the community as well.

15. **Books and Clippings.** If there is a library in the community, it may keep a file of clippings of items connected with the community. Some clippings and souvenir items in private hands may be of interest, and a request might be circulated for this and other types of personal material. Telephone directories may be of use for lists of businesses and advertising. Maps and atlases will be useful in producing a location map of the community, and for information regarding topography, altitude, and average rainfall.

16. **Cemetery Inscriptions.** These will be helpful in determining dates and may aid in ascertaining family relationships. It might be pointed out, however, that these are not necessarily reliable, especially in the case of markers erected long after the deaths of the persons so commemorated.

17. **Pictures and Photographs.** Old family albums will be a treasure to the local historian. Another source may be a "morgue" kept by a professional photographer. Perhaps there was an early amateur enthusiast who patiently hauled pails of water from a pump to wash the prints which now can be used to document the way of life of the community. These pictures will show modes of dress, buildings which have changed or disappeared, machinery and conveyances, and all those things which forever interest the camera fan.

B. PEOPLE:

Old-timers will prove to be a source of information and opinions which have never been recorded. Their reminiscences will add color and detail to the history. As already suggested, these accounts must be taken for what they are worth, since the passing years erase precise recollection. Some old-timers may lack imagination and fail to see the significance in events, while others may be over-dramatic and distort the picture. Conflicting stories often arise and one person's "proof" of a date may conflict with that of another. One may pinpoint an event by reference to the year of the big snowstorm in April when the cattle were caught on the open range, while another states that the event took place a year later because it was the spring that the children had the whooping cough! This is not to suggest, however, that there will not be many old people who have extremely clear memories of persons and events. One author of a local history stated that he consulted over thirty old-timers, checked their stories, and then brought them together for further interviews in order that as authentic an account as possible be given.

Citizens prominent in public affairs and officers of various organizations can be interviewed. Perhaps the first doctor to practice in the community is still living. He will prove a valuable source of informa-

tion with respect to the health record of the community and the difficulties of the early practitioner. He may also provide an insight into the people and affairs with which he was connected professionally or otherwise.

Perhaps a most useful source, if they are not those already involved in the project, will be persons with a natural "bent" in this direction. They may already have collected and written down a good deal of information about the area. Some may be interested in chronology or family records. One is reminded of Jan Struther's Uncle Torrey, of whom she wrote "This was to him a kind of game. It pleased his orderly, pattern-loving mind to unravel the tangled skeins of family relationships, and roll them up in a neat coil and it lessened his loneliness, too, by keeping alive memories of people he had known." If such a person lives in the community the local historian has found a kindred spirit. He may be a source of biographical material and historical information beyond the members of his own clan.

C. PHYSICAL REMAINS:

Relics preserved by an ardent collector or consigned to an attic or junk heap, family heirlooms, and keepsakes may suggest events or modes of living. The old four-horse binder or a straw-burning steam engine consigned to a remote corner of the farmstead will attest to changes in farm machinery. A set of oxen yoke will point up the change in motive power. Candle molds and snuffers will suggest a different picture of the family living room and another phase of the housewife's duties. Some of these items may be significant enough to warrant special mention or a picture. Historic sites such as Indian encampments, fur trading posts, and early buildings will be suggestive of stories which should be included and the remains in themselves may still reveal certain information. Arrowheads, stone hammers, and bone material from the Indian site, fragments of pottery, copper kettles and other trade goods from the fur post are mute testimony to a way of life which has disappeared.

SOURCES OUTSIDE THE COMMUNITY

A. RECORDS, PAPERS, AND PEOPLE:

Outside bodies which exercise some jurisdiction over a particular phase of life in the community may have in their possession records of the type already discussed. Among these are the church records kept by presbyteries, conferences, and dioceses. Another source for school records would be the larger school unit offices.

Where a local newspaper was not established there may have been coverage of the community in the columns of a newspaper in a neighboring town. There may also have been a correspondent contributing regular items to one of the daily papers of the province.

Then there is the possibility of getting information from people who have retired and now live elsewhere. It is possible, too, that valuable correspondence will be in the possession of people who never lived in the community but who received letters from it. Such letters might be difficult to locate, but the possibility is an interesting one.

B. GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS and PUBLICATIONS:

Some Saskatchewan government departments will have useful source material. The Township General Registers, in the Lands Branch

of the Department of Agriculture, provide a record of all homestead entries, including the name of the homesteader and date of entry. The School Attendance reports, as well as teacher and school district files, in the Department of Education, constitute a record which might be consulted where local records have been lost.

Then there are the various publications of government departments throughout the years. These may no longer be available from the issuing department, and may have to be consulted at one of the libraries mentioned below. Among these publications, the annual reports of the Departments of Agriculture, Public Health, Municipal Affairs, and Public Works have much information broken down by locality. The *Public Accounts* will provide information with respect to governmental expenditures in the area. The *Saskatchewan Gazette* lists official appointments, such as Justices of the Peace, notaries public, and coroners, as well as notices of incorporation.

A valuable source of information on communities, particularly in the Territorial period, are the annual reports of federal government departments contained in the *Sessional Papers of Canada*. Among these, the reports of the Department of the Interior, the Postmaster-General, the Auditor-General, the Department of Agriculture, and the North West Mounted Police may provide information about such aspects of the community as crops and the condition of settlers, post offices, mail routes, police posts and contracts for supplies, law and order, Indian affairs, and immigration.

The federal government's topographical survey maps, (3 miles to 1 inch), and township maps listing the names of the surveyors, can be secured from the Controller of Surveys, Department of Natural Resources, Regina. Information on soils may be obtained from the soil reports of the University of Saskatchewan.

C. LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES:

The reference libraries of the larger cities, the Shortt Library of Canadiana at the University of Saskatchewan, the Archives Division of the Legislative Library, Regina, and the Office of the Saskatchewan Archives at the University of Saskatchewan, have collections of documents, government reports, clippings, maps, books, newspapers, and periodicals which may include information useful to the local historian. Early newspapers have been microfilmed by the Saskatchewan Archives. The provincial Director of Historic Sites, Department of Natural Resources, Regina, may have information relative to historic sites in the community.

Libraries, archives offices, and government offices are not staffed to the extent that they can undertake research in response to all enquiries, but the local historian is encouraged to consult them as to material available. A personal visit to these institutions and some time spent examining their collections will yield the most satisfactory results.

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TURNER, ALLAN R.
GUIDE TO WRITING LOCAL HISTORY
IN SASKATCHEWAN
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Turner, Allan R.
Guide to writing local history
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